JAINISM

The Oldest Living Religion

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March 1951

Rs 1/8

Printed by
Rama Krishna Das,
at the Benares Hindu University Press, Benares

PREFACE

Although it should not be necessary to prove that Jainism is the oldest and independent religion of India, yet on account of many reasons it has become essential to prove today During the last two centuries, the Eropean scholars carried on research work on Indian thought and culture in accordance with their own stand points The commencement of Vikrama Era, which was an ordinary thing for Indians, was a matter of great controversy for tho e scholars They could not arrive at a unanimous conclusion even in this respect In the same controversial atmosphere, the history of our national culture and religion was written incompletely and unsystematically Historical works of this sort were prescribed in our educational centres viz colleges and universities Unfortunately, we were taught to think about our cultural and religious history in the light of foreign interpretations Consequently, we find even today in the primary books of history written in the Indian languages that Jainism was founded by Lord Mahāvira Some books indicate that it was founded by Lord Pārśvanātha and Lord Mahāvira simply reorganised it Some say that Jainism is nothing more than a revolt against Vedic culture Really speaking it was neither founded by Lord Pārśvanātha, nor by Mahāvira nor it stood merely as a revolt against the Vedic culture Jainism is an absolutely independent religion and is older

than Vedic culture itself All these facts have been proved in this booklet by Shri Jyoti Prasad Jain, M A, LL B He has given a lot of sound arguments We are very much thankful to him for allowing this booklet to be published We hope, the scholars will have a dispassionate glance at the arguments and remove their wrong conceptions and prejudices If they find any short-coming or error, they will kindly draw our attention towards them The traditional meaning of the Rgvedic hymn which appears on page २२, is different from that which is accepted by Shri Jyoti Prasad Jain, and we are aware of it But we know this also that the interpretation given by the author is not entirely baseless Some non-Jaina writers also give the same interpertation I invite the attention of the scholars especially to this problem Even if we take it for granted that the interpretation of the said hymn, given by the author is not correct, still other arguments presented by him are strong enough to prove the antiquity and independence of Jainism

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JAINISM

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Since the beginning of human civilization, India has ever played her role of being the spiritual mother of nations But "if India stands unique in the world for her spiritual and philosophical developments, no one will deny that the credit belongs to the Jainas no less than to the Brāhmins and the Budhists", says M M Dr S C Vidyabhushan [1] Among others, he is also of opinion that "Jainism is one of the most ancient and noble religions" [2] Sir Sanmukham Chetty said, "It is beyond my capacity to say anything about the greatness of the Jaina religion I have read sufficiently to warrant my saying that the contribution which the Jainas have made to Indian culture is something unique I personally believe that if only Jainism had kept its hold firmly in India, we would perhaps have had a more united India and certainly a greater India than today" [3] Viewed as a religion, the keynote of Jainism has been 'the realisation of the highest ideals' that man's physical and moral nature points out as his final goal, and which, incidentally, is the cardinal canon of universalism

Yet, in the words of Barrister C R. Jain, "The origin of this creed of the Tirthankaras, that is Jainism, has been a faithful source of speculation and error for

[1] Jain Gazette, 1914 p 35

[2] Ibid.

[3] Jain Gazette 1943, p 83-85

the orientalists who have advanced all sorts of hypothesis concerning its rise"[1] In fact, generally due to ignorance and inadequate information, sometimes under the influence of deep-rooted notions and previously formed opinions, and not very seldom carried away by traditional or sentimental prejudices, scholars and historians have very often failed to do justice to Jainism and its history

The early European savants who first began the work of reconstruction and compilation of India's history on the modern scientific basis, in the last quarter of the 18th century, at first took practically no notice of Jainism as even a separate sect Their chief interest then lay in Budhism, Brāhmanism and Islam, which alone represented to them the India past and present But even for the history of these, especially of the Hindus, they could not rely on indigenous sources, since they had already presumed that the Indians had never had any historic sense and had no historical records nor other reliable historical sources worth the name, for the reconstruction of their own history Hence they came to the conclusion that for these they must necessarily look elsewhere They had not far to seek The various foreigners' accounts of India beginning from the 5th-4th century B C down to their own times, readily came to their rescue

The early Greek writers, especially those who accompanied Alexander the Great in his eastern campaign (326 B C), or came to India subsequently as political

[1] Practical Path, Appendix p 174

ambassadors, like Megasthenes (305 B C.), the Chinese Pilgrims like Fa Hian (C 400 A D), Huien Tsang (629-645 A.D) and Itsing (695 A D), some of the Arab merchants who traded with the Deccan kingdoms from the 8th to the 15th century A D, stray visitors like Al Beruni (C. 1000 A D) Marco Polo (1288-1293 A D) and Ibn Batuta (1325 A D), the Jesuit Missionaries of Portugese Goa who visited the Mughal court, and the European adventurers and travellers of the 17th century onwards, like Terry, Bernier, Tavernier, Manucci, Peter Munde etc have all left their respective accounts of India, as and what they saw of it Of these the original Greek records had long since been lost and could only be partially gathered from the Greek and Roman historical works written several centuries after them, but wherein they were said to have been freely used and often quoted[1] Most of the other earlier accounts have also not come down to us complete in their original forms The outlook of the Chinese Pilgrims was entirely Budhistic and what they saw and described was in the main pertaining to their own faith Most of the Muslim writers and historians were biased and their outlook was predominantly Mohammadan And as Prof Rawlinson remarks, 'the European travellers of 17th and 18th century also usually took Mohammadan point of view about the Hindus',[2] Besides, all these foreign writers were practically stangers in a strange land, seldom if ever knew any of the languages of the country, and many of them were ordinary

[1] Rapson—Ancient India, p 84

[2] The Legacy of India—India in European Literature and Thought page 30

lay people of mediocre intelligence They did not come in contact with the real life of the country, had very little opportunity and means of obtaining reliable and adequate information on most points, and whatever *meagre, vague and often eroneous information they* succeeded in collecting, was obtained from hearsay, barbershop and bazar gossip, which they supplemented by their own fanciful and many a time, prejudiced imaginations They could not even understand or rightly interpret many of the things such as sectarian differences etc , which they themselves observed

Yet, these accounts came to be regarded as the most authentic and only reliable sources for the historical reconstruction of this vast, varied and ancient subcontinent, whereas the indigenous sources and traditions, even if recorded, were considered unreliable, legendry, often fictitious or an outcome of the vagrant imagination of the oriental Very soon, numerous ancient monuments, antiquities, epigraphical records and new literary evidences began to come to light, which seemed to support Indian traditions and other sources Even then the latter could be accredited only when and in so far as they were confirmed by their favourite foreigners' accounts No wonder, therefore, that the foundations of modern Indian History have so often proved to be false and shifting, and many wrong notions, distortions or misstatements of facts found their way into the present day history books of India

However, even in most of these foreigners' accounts beginning from the earliest times the Jainas and their religion have very often been referred to, but usually

due to the difficulties of language and the understanding of the writers they were in such forms that the early orientalists handicapped by inadequate information and insufficient knowledge, could not rightly interpret them and failed to identify them with Jainism and the Jainas Still by the second quarter of the 19th century they could not help taking notice of this religion But unfortunately, carried away by its superficial resemblance in some points with Budhism, they soon, rather dogmatically surmised that it was nothing but a later derivation of the latter

At this stage, towards the close of the last century, Dr Hermann Jacobi, the famous orientalist, stepped in and refuted the Budhist derivation theory very successfully [1] *At first he met severe opposition, but finally* his findings were accepted by all Jacobi proved beyond the shadow of any doubt that the Niganth Nātaputta of the Budhist scriptures was none else but Vardhamāna Mahāvira, the last and 24th Tirthankara of the Jainas, that Mahāvira was not only and elder contemporary of Gautama Buddha but he was also a powerful rival of the latter, and that at the period of Mahāvira and even before it, Jainism had been for some time a firmly established religion, and also that Mahāvira did only reform it and reorganize the order of the ascetics The conclusive evidence in this respect, collected by Jacobi and others may be summarised as below —

[1] Sacred Books of the East, vols XXII & XLV (Introductions)—In this world famous series Dr Jacobi published translations of four Jaina canonical works

1 "In the Jaina scriptures are mentioned names of the kings of Magadha and of some religious teachers of the time, contemporary of Mahāvīra, who were also contemporary of Buddha And in the Budhist scriptures Mahāvira is mentioned as Nigantha Nātaputta (Nirgrantha Jñātr-putra) and the place of his death is also indicated as Pāwā So there is no doubt that both were contemporary and independent Budhists often refer to Jainas as a rival sect, but never so much as hint that this sect was a newly founded one On the contrary, from the way in which they speak of it, it would seem that this sect of the Niganthas (those who have no bonds) was at Buddha's time already one of long standing, or in other words it seems probable that Jainism is considerably older than Budhism. Also, Buddha made several experiments in the quest of knowledge, but this was not so with Mahāvira". Mahāvira made no attempts to find or preach a new religion As a matter of fact, Buddha is even said to have entered the Jaina order of ascetics, in his quest of knowledge

2. References are found in Budhist literature to Niganth Nataputta (Mahāvira) and his greatness [1] In the Majjhima Nikāya (P T S, II p 214) the Nirgrantha ascetics tell Buddha that their master Nātaputta was an omniscient and that by his infinite knowledge he has told them what sins they have committed in their

[1] "The Nigganṭha Nātaputta knows and sees all things, claims perfect knowledge and faith teaches the annihilation by austerities of the old karma and prevention by inactivity of new karma When karma ceases, misery ceases, S B E. Vol. XXII, p XVff.

previous births The Samyutta Nikāya (P T S, IV p 398) tells us about the belief that the famous Nātaputta could tell where his disciples would be born after their death, and on being inquired could also tell where a particular person was thus reborn The Anguttara Nikāya also refers the belief that Nigantha Nātaputta could know all, could perceive all, that his knowledge was unlimited and that he was omniscient during all the hours we are waking or sleeping or following our mundane persuits Rockhill, in his 'Life of Buddha' (p 259) confirms the same statement as having been made by Mahāvira to king Ajātaśatru In the Sāmagāma Sutta, there is a reference to the schism among Mahāvira's followers after his death at Pāwā—the fact was related to Buddha who evidently survived Mahāvira "From Budhist accounts in their canonical works as well as in other books, it may be seen that this rival (Mahāvira) was a dangerous and influential one, and that even in Buddha's time his teaching has spread considerably" (Buhler—The Jains) "Mahāvira must have been a great man in his way and an eminent leader among his contemporaries", says Jacobi, and "Like his great rival Buddha he must have been an eminently impressive personality", says Hoernle According to the Budhist tradition, Mahāvira was one of the more important of the six Tirthankaras of Buddha's times [1] These famous teachers, outside the pale of Brāhminism were the Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, Makkhali Gośala (founder of the Ājivika sect), Sañjaya Belatthiputta, Ajita Kesa-

[1] B C Law—Historical Gleanings p 21-42—Influence of the five heretical Teachers on Jainism and Budhism.

Kambalin, Pūraṇa Kassapa and Pakudha Kaccāyana. And the followers of Mahāvīra, called the Niganṭhas, are described in an old Buddhist Sutta, the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (S.B.E., vol. XI, p. 106) as "Heads of companies of disciples and students, teachers of students, well known and renowned founders of schools of doctrine, esteemed as good men by the multitude."

3 References to mutual connections between the two sects —

(i) In the Mahāvagga, about Simha, the general-in-chief of the Licchavis of Vaiśālī, and a lay disciple of Lord Mahāvīra who goes against his prohibition to see the Buddha and is converted by him

(ii) A reference in the Majjhima Nikāya to the conversion of Upāli, a lay disciple of Lord Mahāvīra, after a dispute with the Buddha as to the comparative iniquitousness of the sins of the body and the mind

(iii) Mrs. Rhys Davids in 'Psalms of the Early Budhists (London 1903) gives several instances of conversions from Budhism to Jainism and vice versa, viz Ajjuna a Budhist contacts the Jainas and enters their order, prince Abhaya is said to have been taught a dilemma by Nātaputta, and so on

(iv) Dr B C Law in his 'Historical Gleanings' refers to the relation of Buddha with the Niganthas and to their mutual conversions, giving examples of Simha, Saccaka, Śrigupta,

Gṛhadinna, Dīgha Tapassi, Upāli, Abhaya Rājakumāra, Viśākhā etc.

(v) Mentions of Jainism are also found in other famous works like Sumaṅgalā Vilāsinī, Lalita Vistāra, the Jātakas, Dathā Vamso etc

4 References in old Budhist books to well known and acknowledged doctrines of Jaina theology, metaphysics and ethics —

(i) A reference to cold water possessing a soul i e to Jiwas of Jalakāya, in the Brahmajāla Sutta of Dīgha Nikāya

(ii) A reference in the same to the Jaina rejection of the Ājīvika doctrine that the soul has colour (i e doctrine of Leśyā)

(iii) In the Majjhima Nikāya, a reference to the three Dandas of body, speech and mind, in which the Jainas believed, and also in connection with Upāli's conversion, to the Jaina conception of the sins of the body and the mind

(iv) In the Anguttara Nikāya, a reference to the Jaina Digvirati Vow and the Uposatha (proṣadha) day Digvirati Vow i e 'I shall go in only certain fixed direction this day' Uposatha—keeping of fast in which the laymen are supposed to be like ascetics in their thoughts and deeds

(v) In the same Nikāya, in connection with the meeting of Prince Abhaya and the Buddha, a reference to the Jaina conception of the annihilation of Karmas, old or new and

thereby the attainment of full knowledge, by means of austerity

(vi) In the Mahāvagga, reference of the Jaina doctrine of Kriyāvāda

5 Traces of Jaina influence in Budhism —Dr Jacobi says, "The latter (i e Budhists) borrowed the word Āsrava from Jainism without its technical significance As Buddha was chiefly concerned with what leads to salvation, he did not work out a new and self-sufficient system of psychology as the basis of ethics He seems to have largely adopted current ideas on this head and together with them current terms to express them Hence there is something vague and undefined in Budhist psychology" Jacobi asserted that the word Āsrava would never have been used by the Budhists in meaning so far removed from its etymology if the Jainas had not used it before in its etymological sense (like the word 'influence' of the Latin astrologers, adopted in English etc [1])

The Budhists also use the word Samvara i e Śila-Samvara (restraint under the moral Law), and the participle Samvrta (controlled), words which are not used in this sense by Brāhmanical writers, and, therefore, are most probably adopted from Jainism, wherein their literal sense they adequately express the idea that they denote" [2]

[1] Jain Gazette Jan. 1914 p 8-12.

[2] The Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics, vol. VII, p 472. In his introduction to 'Bhagwān Mahāvira and Mahātmā Buddha', Dr B C. Law gives many other examples of such borrowals and adoptations by the Budhist from Jainism.

6 Indirect evidence recorded by the Budhists of the importance and probable high antiquity of Jainism —

(i) "They mention the Jainas (the Niganthas) as the opponents and converts of Buddha, and never imply, much less assert that they are a newly founded sect"

(ii) They mention the older Nigantha Caityas of the Licchavis of Vaiśāli

(iii) In the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* of the Digha Nikāya, there is a reference to the 'four vows' (Cāturyāma Dharma) of Lord Pārśwa Nātha "This passage is specially important as it shows that the Budhists were also aware of the older traditions of the Jainas with regard to the times and teachings of Lord Pārśwa Natha", says Dr Jacobi

(iv) Makkhali Gośāla divides mankind into six classes The third class is the Nigantha sect Jacobi says a new sect could not have held such an important place in a division of mankind

(v) The Buddha had a dispute with Saccaka, the non-Nirgrantha son of a Nirgrantha father, which fact, according to Dr Jacobi, proves decisively that the Jainas were not an offshoot of Budhism

(vi) In the Budhist Dhammapada (v 422) there is a mention of Ṛṣabha and 'Mahāvira, the first and the last Jaina Tirthankaras, respectively

(vii) The Budhist scholar Āryadêva mentions Ṛṣabhadeva as the original founder of Jainism [1]a

7 Then there is the evidence of the Jaina books themselves Dr Jacobi says, "There are no reasonable grounds to reject the recorded tradition of a numerous class of men as being a tissue of meaningless lies All the events and incidents that relate to their antiquity are recorded so frequently and in such a matter of fact way that they cannot be properly rejected, unless under force of much stronger evidence than the one adduced by the scholars who are sceptic about the antiquity of Jainism In the Uttarādhyayana Sūtra an interview between Gautama and Keśi, the followers of Lord Mahāvira and Pārśwa respectively, is held in a garden and after good conversation carried on more or less in occult terms, the two leaders recognise the fundamental unity of the doctrines of their respective teachers and leave the garden fully convinced that they are workers in the same field This again points out to an older Jaina faith which prevailed before the advent of Mahāvira and which was so vigorously reformed by him"

8 Lastly, there is the ancient character of the Jaina philosophy—their animistic belief, the absence of the category of quality in their enumeration of the principal constituent elements of the universe, and the inclusion of Dharma (that which helps motion of things) and of Adharma (means or motive of stopping motion) in the class of substances along with Jīva (soul), Pudgala

[1] Sata śāstra (5th century A D)

(matter), Ākāśa (space) and Kāla (time), the six eternal Dravyas or elements of universe From a consideration of these facts in Jaina philosophy, Prof Jacob concluded that it was evolved in a very early period of the Aryan settlement in India, and said that this explodes once and for ever the error that Jainism is an off-shoot of Budhism.[1]

It was thus proved beyond Cavail that Jainism is quite an independent and 'exceptionally archaic' religious system, which is not only not an off-shoot of Budhism but is considerably older that the latter

To quote a few of the other numerous authorities —Prof Rhys Davids—"The Jainas have been an organised community all through the history of India from before the rise of Budhism down to the present time" [2]

E W Hopkins—"The Niganthas are never referred to by the Budhists as being a new sect, nor is their reputed founder Nataputta spoken of as their founder whence Jacobi plausibly argues that their real founder was older than Mahāvira and that this sect preceded that of Budhism" [3]

[1] In one of his lectures he says 'My studies of Jainism made me reject the old theory and convinced that Jainism is entirely independent of Budhism. The difference between the two philosophies seems so great that it precludes any idea of common origin" —Jain Gazette May 1914, p 169

[2] Budhist India 2nd ed London 1903 p 318

[3] Religion of India, p 283

Thus practically all the modern scholars, both western and eastern, including Prof Max Muller, Oldenberg, Bendole, Sir Monier Williams, Sir W W. Hunter, Harvey, Wheeler, Dr R. G Bhandarkar, Dr K P Jayaswal, B G Tilak, etc have no doubt as to the greater antiquity of Jainism over Budhism.

Moreover, the historicity of Lord Pārśwanātha[1] (877-777 B C) who preceded Mahāvīra by 250 years, and was the 23rd Tīrthankara of the Jainas, has now been unanimously accepted He was the son of King Aśwa Séna of Kāśi, of the Uraga Vamśa (also called Kāśyapa Vamśa) and was a descendent of emperor Brahmadatta (a historical figure[2]) who was the last of the twelve chakravartins of the Jaina tradition

"That Pārśwa was a historical person is now admitted by all as very probable", says Jacobi [3]

Dr Jarl Charpentier, Ph D says, "We ought also to remember both that the Jaina religion is certainly older than Mahāvira, his reputed predecessor Pārśwa having almost certainly existed as a real person, and that consequently the main points of the original doctrine may have been codified long before Mahāvira".[4]

[1] Cambridge History of India, p 153—which fully endorses this view, as also does the Encycl of Religion and Ethics, vol. VII.

[2] Dr H C. Roy Choudhry—Political History of Ancient India, p 47 He says that at his time Kāśi was the predominent state and that according to the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (xiii 5, 4, 19) these kings of Kāśi were antagonistic to Vedic Sacrifices

[3] Jain Sutras—S B E. XLV Introd.

[4] Uttarādhyayan Sutra—Upsala ed. Introd. p 21

Dr R. C Majumdar—"The first 22 of them are, however, unknown to history and reasonable doubts may be entertained regarding the existence of most of them But the 23rd Tirthankara Pārśwa seems to have had a real existence His death may be placed in the 8th century B C"[1]

Harmsworth—"They, the Jainas believe in a great number of prophets of their faith anterior of Nātaputta (Mahāvira Vardhamāna) and pay special reverence to the last of these, Pārśwa or Pārśwa Nātha Herein they are correct, in so far as the latter personality is more than mythical He was indeed the royal founder of Jainism (776 B C) while his successor Mahāvira was younger by many generations and can be considered only as a reformer As early as the time of Gotama, the religious confraternity founded by Pārśwa and known as the Nirgrantha, was a formally established sect, and according to the Budhist chronicles, threw numerous difficulties in the way of the rising Budhism"[2]

Prof Ram Prasad Chanda, the famous archæologist says, "The Pali Suttas confirm good deal of what is contained in the Śwetāmbara Jaina canon The ancient Jain sculptures of Mathurā dating from the first century A D guarantee the antiquity and authenticity of many of the Jaina traditions It is generally believed that there were Jaina monks before Mahāvīra, belonging

[1] Outline of Ancient Indian History and Civilization, p 216 and An Advanced History of India p 86

[2] History of the World, vol, II, p 1198

to the order founded by Pārśwa Nātha They had also their own Caityas"[1]

Dr B C Law, Ph D, D Litt, F R A S B etc, says, "Before the advent of Mahāvira, the faith of which he was the last exponent seems to have been prevalent in Vaiśāli and the surrounding country in some earlier form It appears that the religion as fixed and established by Pārśwanātha was followed by some at least of the Kṣatriya peoples of North—eastern India, specially amongst the residents of Vaiśālī We learn from the Ācārāṅga Sūtra that Mahāvira's parents were worshippers of Pārśwa and follower of the Śramaṇas"[2]

Prof J C Vidyālaṅkāra, speaking of the religious teachers of the post Mahabhārata times, says, "One such great reformer, Tīrthankara Pārśwa flourished in the 9th-8th century B C His father was Aśwasena, king of Vārānasi (Banaras), and his mother's name was Vāmā The Jainas believe that their religion is very ancient and that 23 other Tīrthankaras had gone before Mahāvīra It is not just and proper to regard this belief as quite erroneous and baseless and to regard all previous Tīrthankaras as imaginary beings and unhistorical There is nothing unbelievable about it The early history of India is as much Jainistic as it is of those who profess the Vedas for the present, the modern critics have accepted the historicity of Tīrthankara Pārśwa The accounts of the other Tīrthankaras

[1] Medieval Sculpture in Eastern India—J D L., III, 1920, p 225 246

[2] Vaisāli—Mahavira's Birth Place—J A., X, 1, p 16

are so involved in legends that they have not yet been reconstructed But there are definite proofs of the fact that there existed in India sects different from the Vedic faith even before Mahāvira and Buddha The Arhats and their Caityas were in existence before the birth of Buddha (Buddha himself refers to Mahāvīra's own clan, the Licchavis and to their religion) The followers of those Arhatas and Caityas were known as the Vrātyas who are also mentioned in the Atharva Veda" [1]

And speaking about these Vrātyas,[2] Dr K P Jayaswal said, "They are called Vrātyas or un Brahmanical Kṣatriyas, they had a republican form of Government, they had their own shrines, their non vedic worship, their own religious leaders, they patronised Jainism" [3]

Thus in the words of Dr A Guerinot, "There can no longer be any doubt that Pārśwa Nātha was a historical personage".[4] And there is evidence to show that his faith prevailed not only in different parts of India but it also penetrated beyond the frontiers of this country

Sir P C Mogha[5] writing about the prevalence of Jainism long before Gautama Buddha, informs

[1] Bhāratiya Itihās Ki Roopa Rekhā, vol I, p 343-349

[2] About these Vrātyas or Kshātra Bandhus and of their being none but the Jains see Prof A. Chakravarti's article in Jain Gazette, XXXI, pp 6 and also Dr Har Prasad Shastri's article in J B O R.S vol V, p 554 558 and also Anekānta 6/7, p 335 336

[3] Modern Review, 1929, p 499

[4] Essai de Bibliographica Jainica—Introd

[5] Jain Gazette, Aug 1906 p 13

that about 1885, Prof Beal told the Royal Asiatic Society that there undoubtedly was such a faith in central Asia long before Budhism was promulgated by Śākya Muni Gautama Also that Sir Henry Rawlinson has in the proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society (Sept 1885) and his 'Central Asia' (p 246) called attention to the new Vihāra (Monastry) at Balkh and other monumental remains in bricks, as showing the presence of Kāśyapa there

Now Kāśyapa, besides being the name of an ancient Jaina Muni and the Gotra of several Tirthankaras was also the Gotra of Pārśwanātha. According to the Ādipurāna, Kāśyapa whose another name was Maghawā, was the founder of the Uraga Vamśa (a branch of the ancient Nāga family) in which Tirthankara Pārswa was born [1]

The geographical name Kaspia (or Caspia) resembles Kāśhyapa and in this city (i e Kiapishi) of Central Asia Hiuentsang in the 7th century A D also noted the appearance of the Niganthas or the Jainas,[2] and about a thousand years before him the Greeks had *similarly come across them near the north west* borders of India [3] Hence it may reasonably

[1] J S B, XIV, 2 p 13, Sankṣipta Ādi Purana, p. 27, I H Q, I, p 460 and II, p 28

[2] Beal, Siyuki—vol I, p 55 'This says Dr Buhler, 'points apparently to the fact that they (the Jainas) had in the northwest at least spread their missionary activity beyond the borders of India' —(The Jainas)

[3] M C. Crindle—Ancient India —They referred to the Jainas by the words Gymnosophists, Sarmanas Veretei etc. and scholars have now no doubt that these denote the Niganthas or the Jainas

be inferred that Jainism was once, even before Mahāvīra, prevalent in Kaspia Aman and the cities of Samarkand, Balkh etc.[1] Herodotus, the father of Greek history, in the 5th century B C. wrote about an Indian religious sect which are nothing which had life and lived on a grain like millet The Greek philosopher Pythagoras (born 580 B C) who was a contemporary of Mahāvīra and Buddha believed in the theory of metapsychosis, in the transmigration of souls, in the doctrine of Karma, refrained from the destruction of life and eating meat and even regarded certain vegetables as taboo He even claimed to possess the power of recollecting his past births These early Ionian philosophers of Asia Minor, called the Orphic philosophers also believed in depreciation of the body in comparison with the soul[2] Now all these beliefs are peculiary and distinctively Jaina and they have little in common with either the Budhist or the Brahmanic religions And since they were already professed in these far off lands at a time when Mahāvīra and Buddha were just beginning to preach, and since there is no doubt that these ideas reached thither from India itself, there remains no doubt

[1] Jain Gazette August, 1906, p 13

[2] The Legacy of India (Oxford 1937)—India in European Literature and Thought by H G Rawlinson, p 3-6 —The author himself admits that these ideas seem to refer to the Jainas or Budhists But they could not possibly refer to Budhism which originated with Gautama Buddha who is believed to have died in 476 or 483 B C. Moreover, the Budhists even Buddha himself never refrained from eating meat while tabooing even certain vegetables is peculiar only to the Jainas Same is the case with most of the other ideas mentioned above

that they owned their propagation, if not to any earlier Tirthankara, at least certainly to Pārśwa[1] and his disciples In fact as Dr Radhakrishnan says, "There is no doubt that Jainism prevailed even before Vardhamāna or Pārswanātha" [2]

"But" says Dr Nagendra Natha Basu, the reputed scholar, Sanskritist and Laxicographer, "Nemi Nātha, the 22nd Tirthankara of the Jainas, who preceded Lord Pārswa Nātha, was a cousin of Lord Śri Krṣna If we admit the historicity of Lord Krṣna, there is no reason why we should not regard his contemporary Lord Neminātha, the 22nd Tirthankara as a real and historical person" [3]

Dr Fuhrer says, "Lord Neminātha, the 22nd Tirthankara of the Jainas has been accepted as a historical person" [4] Same is the opinion of Prof L D Barnett [5]

Mr Karwa says, "Neminātha was the cousin of Krṣna When the 22nd Tirthankara of the Jainas was a contemporary of Lord Krsna, the readers may well imagine the antiquity of the remaining 21 Tirthankaras" [6]

Col Tod—"To me it appears that there were four distinguished Boodhas or Wisemen The second (the

[1] For a life of Parswa see 'Lord Parśwa Natha' by H S Bhattacharya and Bhagawan Pārśwa Nātha by K P Jain

[2] Indian Philosophy vol I, p 287

[3] Harivamsa Purāna—Introd p 6

[4] Epigrahica Indica Part I, p 389 and Part II, p 206-7

[5] Ancient Mid Indian Kshatriya Tribes vol I, foreword p IV

[6] Bhagawad Geeta—Appendix.

twenty-second of the Jainas) was Neminātha, in 1120 B.C.", and says that he was contemporary of Kṛṣna[1]

Dr Hari Satya Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L. Ph.D., has no doubt as to the historicity of Neminātha,[2] and on its basis rather, establishes the historicity of Kṛṣna He says, "Notwithstanding remarkable differences, the Kṛṣna story in the Jaina Purānas is essentially similar to that of the Vedic Purānas" He is of opinion that the Jaina version is quite independent of the Brahmanic traditions, and that "the appearance of the Kṛṣna story in the Jaina sacred books shows that Kṛṣna of the Mahābhārata may not be a purely imaginary being but that in all probability he was a historic person, a high souled powerful monarch"[3]

Moreover, as Rev J Kennedy says, "The Jaina traditions represent the oldest form of the Kṛṣna legend"[4]

In fact, the Jaina traditions about Neminātha or Ariṣtanemi as incorporated in their Harivamśa, Ariṭṭha

[1] Annals—Vol. I p 97 99 He also curiously makes Nemi nath indentical with the first Odin of the Scandinavians and the first Fo of the Chinese. He also says that the first Indian Boodha was Ādinatha or Rṣabha Deva

[2] 'Lord Ariṣṭa Nemi, p 88 89

[3] Heroes of Jaina Legends—J A., XIV, 2, p 77

In the Jaina tradition Kṛṣna is called a Nārāyana and a devotee of Jina Even the orthodox vedic Hindus regarded him a Vrātya and outside the pale. (See Advanced History of India, 1948 p. 95)

[4] The Child Kṛṣna, Christianity and the Gujars—JRAS 1907, p 951 991

Nemi Chariu and other works, are fully corroborated by the Brāhmanic traditions There are specific mentions of Ariṣṭanemi in the Vedas, their commentaries and the Hindu Purāṇas, which clearly indicate the Jaina Tīrthankara[1] In the Vedic hymns he is described as one "who is capable of crossing over the ocean of life and death, as the remover of violence, one who is instrumental in sparing life from injury and so on"[2] Well renowned Vedic scholars like Swami Virupāksha Vadiyar, M A, Vedaratna,[3] are fully convinced that these Vedic and Puranic references undoubtedly refer to the Jaina Tīrthankara Ariṣṭanemi and to nobody else What is more important is that even the Mahābhārata[4] makes a mention of his name with the adjective Jineśwara, in at least two places

[1] Rigveda (8, 8 24, and 10 178 1) Yajurveda (25, 19 and 9, 25), Sāmaveda (4, 1) Atharva Veda (20, 143 10) Aitareya Brāhman (20 2) Yask Nirutka (10 12), Sarvanukramanika Vēdārtha Dīpikā, Sayana Bhāṣya (p 678) The Skanda Purāṇa—Prabhās Khanda, (16, 96), The Bhagawata (2, 7, 10) The Markandeya Purana (50 39-41) etc Also see Jain references in the Vedic and Puranic Literature—'Delhi 1930

[2] J S B, XIII, 2 p 89 90 This particular hymn is—
"स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवा स्वस्ति न पूषा विश्ववेदा ।
स्वस्ति नस्तार्क्ष्यो अरिष्टनेमि स्वस्तिनो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु ॥"
—(Rg 1 1, 16, Yajur 25 19, Sāma 3, 9)

[3] Jaina Patha Pradarśaka III 3 p 106-112. He says that even the Vedic interpretation of the term Ariṣṭanemi used therein is in conformation with the Jaina doctrines, and that Uvvaṭacārya also in his commentary on that hymn of Yajurveda interprets it as the Propagator of Ahimsa

[4] Mahabharata—Anuśasana, ch. 149, vs 50, 80, p 151

Dr Prana Natha Vidhyalankara published a copper plate grant of the Babylonian (Chaldean) king Nebuchadnazzar (circa 1140 B C), which he had discovered in Kathiawar, in the 'Times of India' (weekly) of 19th March, 1935 According to his decipherment, this document revealed that 'the said king Nebuchadnazzar *who was also the lord of* Rewānagar (in Kathiawar) and who belonged to Su-(sumer) Tribe has come to the place (Dwārakā) of the Yaduraja He has built a temple and paid homage and made the grant perpetual in favour of Lord Nemi the paramount deity of Mt Raivata"[1] Prof Prana Natha himself says, "The inscription is of great historical value It may go a long way in proving the antiquity of Jaina religion since the name of Nemi appears in the inscription"

This important document, however, proves that the worship of Lord Nemi Nātha,[2] the 22nd Jaina *Tīrthankara*, was *already well established in the post* Mahābhārata days, even before the advent of Pārśwa and Mahāvīra And there should now remain no doubt as to the historicity of Lord Aristanemi and to the existence of Jainism long before Parśwanātha (9th century B C)

Aristanemi was the son of king Samudravijaya *of Śauripura (near Agra)*, who was *an uncle of Lord*

[1] J A, XIV, I, p 3 J S B XIV, I p 21, The 'Jain'—35, 1, p 2

[2] The description of Neminath given in this grant is identical with that of the Vedic hymns, and leaves no doubt to his being identical with the Jaina Tīrthankara of that name'—Virodha Parihā, p 63-64

Kṛṣṇa But when all the Yaduvamsies under Kṛṣṇa migrated to Dwārakā on the western coast, Neminātha also came along with him Kṛṣṇa negotiated his cousin's marriage with Rājuli Mati, the daughter of the Rājā of Junagarh But Neminātha, taking compassion on the animals which were to be slaughtered in connection with the marriage feast, left the marriage procession at once, renounced the world, climbed the top of mount Raivata (Giranāra or Urjayanta), there practised severe austerities, attaining Keval Jñāna, preached the non-violent creed of the foregoing Tīrthaṅkara, to the world, and finally attained salvation [1]

Thus, there is no question about his being a real historical person, but there is some difficulty in fixing his date, because opinions still differ as to the exact date of the Mahābhārata war, which with different scholars varies from 950 B C to 3000 B C But the latest concensus of opinion fixes it in the middle of the 15th century B C,[2] and this is now generally regarded as the starting point of the regular history of India The period prior to that, about which our knowledge is mainly based on religious traditions, the Jaina and Hindu Purānas, is called proto-history, chiefly because the history of that period could not yet be reconstructed on any sound basis

[1] H S Bhattacharya—Lord Ariṣṭanemi The Jaina Hari vamsa Ariṭṭha Nemi Chariu, Nemi Purana etc

[2] Pargitor—950 B C. R C Majumdar—1000 B C., Tod—1120 B C., Dr H C. Roy Choudhry—1376 B C. Prof. J C Vidya lankara—1424 B C. Dr K P Jayasawal and others—1450 B C., Certain Purānas give it as 1414 B C., while astronomers and later traditions as 3102 or 2449 B C.

But the name of Rāma or the story of Rāmāyana is as much an every-day homeward in India as the name of Krsna or the story of Mahābhārata And although many a scholar still persist in believing the Rāma story to be a legendary one, the majority of scholars, especially Indian ones along with the general masses and intelligentia of the country firmly believe most of the events and persons connected with the story, to be quite real and *historical even though they might* be *beyond the* pale of scientific history and their date unknown

Here again, "The story of Rāmāyana as stated in the Jaina Purānas, is substantially similar to the account of Vālmiki It is also quite independent of the Brāhmanic version",[1] says Dr H S Bhattacharya And further that "Thus the very fact that the Jainas have respectfully embodied the Rāma story in their sacred lore is almost a proof conclusive that it is more than philosophical speculation in symbolic garb and that it may have a historical basis Under the circumstances one would not be unjustified in holding that the Rāma story has at least a core of historical truth" [2]

In fact the oldest available Jaina version of this story, that is Pauma Cariu of Vimala Suri,[3] belongs about to the same period as the oldest Brāhmanic version, *the Rāmāyana of Vālmiki i e to the first century* B C Moreover, the Jaina Samskrta Padma Purāna (7th century A D), Swayambhū Rāmāyana of Apabhramśa

[1] Heroes of the Jaina legends—J.A., XIII, 2 p 21

[2] J A., XIV, 1, p 13

[3] An Advanced History of India p 142.

(8th century A D), the Munisuvrata Kāvya and Purānas did no less to preserve and popularise the story than the Brāhmanic Purānas and vernacular Rāmāyanas of comparatively much later dates

But in what the Jaina version differs from the Brāhmanic Rāmāyana, throws a very significant light on the position of Jainism According to the Jaina version, Rāvana and his Rākṣasas were highly cultured people belonging to the race of Vidyādharas and were great devotees of Jina Here unlike the Hindu epics they are not depicted as hideous looking, evil natured, irreligious demons, Rakṣasas, Piśācas or Asuras, but certainly as antagonistic to the sacrificial cult of the vedic sages And it is why, as Dr Bhattacharya observed that "Considering these two accounts together some of the present day-scholars vehemently urge that 'the vedic people denounced the Rāksasas because they were Jainas, and say that the descriptions of the Raksasas in Vālmiki's Rāmāyana clearly show that they could not be other than Jainas, and that the author of the Rāmāyana presented them in hideous forms, simply out of religious bigotry".[1] F E Pargitor also asserts that "The Jainas were treated as Asuras and Daityas (terms of hatred etc) by the Hindus'[2] "Rhode", says *Edkins "also supposes the Jainas to be* descendents of Asuras and Rāksasas"[3] And C. F Oldham is of opinion that "Both Budhists and Jainas systems were closely connected with the sun and the

[1] Heroes of Jaina Legends—J A. XIV, 1, p 9

[2] Ancient Indian Historical Tradition, London 1922, p 291

[3] Joseph Edkins—Chinese Buddhism, London 1880, p 156-158

serpent, and they found their chief supporters amongst the Solar Tribes who had come but little under Brāhmanical influence The Purāna version is that the Jainas originated amongst the Asuras The Jainas were in existence before Buddha. All the twenty four Tirthankaras were ksatriyas and all but two were of the solar race of Ikṣwāku"[1]

Now there is no question as to Rāma's being of the Solar race of Ikṣwāku According to the Jaina tradition, he along with most of the members of his family was a follower of Jainism Not only that but Rāma Candra, his brother Lakṣmana and their enemy Rāvana were three of the 63 prominent personages (The Tri-ṣaṣti Śalākā Puruṣas) of the Jaina tradition wherein the Rākṣasas and Vānaras of the Rāmāyana have been described not as semi human, sub-human animal or demons but as highly civilized and cultured human beings of the Vidyādhara race,[2] who were mostly devotees of the Jina These early non Aryan inhabitants of India are now generally termed as Drāvidians According to Pargitor, even "The Sūryavamsis or Solar race were the indigenous inhabitants of this country and were of Drāvidian stock"[3] And as will be presently shown, the religion of these early Drāvidians was Jainism

The Yoga Vaśiṣtha Rāmāyana, the authorship of which is ascribed by some to sage Vaśiṣtha, the

[1] The Sun and the Serpent, London 1905, p 172 181

[2] J S,B—XIV,,1, p 17 23

[3] Ancient Indian Historical Tradition, p 295 296

family priest of Rāma Candra and by others to Valmiki, mentions that 'Rāma longed to become like a Jina'[1] Even the Vālmiki Rāmāyana, which like the Mahā bhārata was a product of the age of Brāhmanic revival and in the same manner truely represents the highly prejudicial and communal spirit of the revivalists, and which studiously avoided making any reference to Jainism or the Jainas did slip up in certain places For example, it mentions that King Daśaratha, the father of Rāma had entertained the Śramanas,[2] which according to Bhūsana's commentary, were the Digambara Jaina ascetics[3]

Thus there remains no doubt that in the time of Rāma Jainism existed and Lord Munisuvrata Nātha,[4] the 20th Tirthankara of the Jainas, who was a prince of Rājagrha and a senior contemporary of Rāma was as real a person as Rāma himself

Moreover, it was in the times of Munisuvrata that a hot discussion was held at the court of King Vasu Caidyoparicara as to whether animals or vegetable products are to be sacrificed in the Vedic Yajñas King Vasu, however, gave his verdict in favour of animal sacrifice and since then the horrible practice commenced

[1] Yoga Vaśistha—Vairāgya Prakarana, Ch. 15, V 8, p 33 In this ancient work there are several other references to Jainism and its doctrines (in 3 3, 49 50, 4, 22, 30, and Pt II, 6, 173, 34) Also see Satyārtha Darpana, p 90

[2] Rāmāyana Bālakānda—XIV, 12.

[3] 'Jainism by V K. Mukerji Bhagawān Parśwanātha p 24

[4] Pauma Cariu Padma Purana, Uttara Purāna, Munisuvrata Purāna etc

This story of Vasu is practically identical in both the Jaina and Brāhmanical traditions, which is a proof of its veracity [1]

Of the remaining Tirthankaras, Rṣabha, the first, Ajitanātha, the second and Supārśwa, the seventh also seem to find mentions in the Vedas [2]

Then there is the curious story of King Venu who was originally a Hindu following the Vedas, but who became a Jaina monk at the instruction of a Jaina Muni, and therefore is called a sinner and his change of faith regarded as a degradation Shri S C Ghoshal, M A, B L., Purāna Kāvya Tirtha etc says, "This is only natural as the work (i e Hindu Padma Purāna) in which the story is related indicates the teachings which are not favourable to Jainism, but from this story we can infer that it might be a historical fact that Venu, a Hindu king became a convert to Jainism As far as I know, this fact has not been noticed by scholars who try to establish the antiquity of Jainism" [3]

Now this story occurs in almost all the Brāhmanic Purānas, and this king Venu is stated in the Padma and Vamana Purānas to have been the sixth in descent from Brahmā, the progenitor of mankind, while in the Bhāgawata the 11th, in the Garuda Purāna 13th, and

[1] The story occurs in the Mahābhārata and is also hinted at in the Buddhist Sutta Nipāta The Jaina version is available in the Jaina Harivamsa Purana, XVII p 263-272. See also J S B XIII 1 p 13

[2] Radhakrishnan—Indian Philosophy, Vol I p 287

[3] Jainism in Non Jain Literature—J G Feb 1918, p 87

in the Viṣnu and rest of the other Purānas, 9th in descent from Swayambhu Manu, the first man and the son of Brhmā, the Creator[1] Venu is also said to have preached Jainism to the Asuras Mr Ghoshal says, "It is clear from all the Purānas that Venu was from the beginning opposed to animal sacrifice and to the Brāhmins and that he became not only a heretic and anti-Vedic, but even a Jaina"[2] There are several other stories in the different Purānas about the origin of Jainism[3] But what is interesting about them is the fact that they invariably make some important personage belonging to their faith, first a convert to Jainism, under the influence of some or other of its teachers, and then make this new convert preach his new faith This clearly proves two things, first, that in the early Vedic period conversions from the Brahmanic faith to Jainism were very common and, secondly, that Jainism was already an established religion even in the earliest times and was more popular amongst the Non-Aryan indigenous races, called by the Aryans as Asuras, Daityas, Rākṣasas etc

[1] 'Story of Benu' J G' July 1918, p 156

[2] Ibid

[3] According to another story occurring in the Padma Purāna Jainism was preached by Śukracārya, the preceptor of the Asuras. Another version says that God Viṣnu with the help of Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of the gods sent Maha Majā (delusion) in the disguise of a Jaina Muni to mislead the Daityas. The Bhāgawata attributes the propagation of Jainism to Arhat the King of Konk Bek Kuṭak, who was a devotee of Ṛṣabha For other instances see Śkāndā Purāna (36-37 38 p 154-161) Viṣnu Purāna (Pt III, Ch 17 18), Śiva Purāna (Pt 5 Ch 4, 5) etc.

And sihce, as Macdonnel says, "The Hindu Purānas contain much that is old, and do not always borrow from Mahābhārata and Manu, but derive information from the Vedas themselves and from some older collections",[1] the significance of these stories, particularly of the story of Venu which is related by all the Purānas, cannot be over-estimated It clearly takes back the antiquity of Jainism to about the very beginning of the Brāhmanic creation, or rather to a period prior to the origin of Brāhmanism itself[2]

Still there are some scholars who, owing mostly to deeprooted prejudices and other sentimental reasons, persist in believing and asserting that Jainism is an offshoot of Brāhmanism or that the Jainas are merely Hindu dissenters like the Buddhists, even though their religion is quite independent of and much older than the latter

As would be clear from what was already been said, there are absolutely no grounds for holding such an opinion There are innumerable references in the Brāhmanic literature from the Vedas down to the

[1] A A Macdonnel—A History of Sanskrit Literature p 299

[2] In fact according to the Jaina tradition the Brāhmanas came into being much later The original Varna was that of the Kṣatriyas alone Even according to the Brāhmanic Purānas themselves (i.e Vāyu 88 5-7 Viṣnu 4 2 2 and Brhmanda 3, 63, 5-7) the progeny of Rathitara the fifth in descent from Nabhaga who had turned a Vaiśya and was a grandson of Manu became the first Brāhmanas and were called Angirasas And it would be interesting to note that the Muṇdakopaniṣad of sage Angiras shows, according to Dr Hertell, unmistakable signs of Jaina influence (Indo-Iranian Studies etc Vol III)

Purānas and other medieval literature, to the Jainas, their religion, its Tirthankaras and even their doctrines,[1] sometimes ridiculing and denouncing them,[2] and sometimes praising and applauding them,[3] while

[1] Word 'Arhan' is often mentioned in the Rk and other Vedas (see Max Muller's edition 1854, vol. II, p. 579). The Jaina ascetics are referred to therein as 'Windgirdled i.e nude (see Weber—Ind Ant XXX, 1901) For other relevent Vedic hymns see, 'Veda Purānadi Granthoñ meñ Jaina Dharma kā Astitwa', 'Virodha Parihāra', 'Satyārtha Darpana' The Śramaṇas of the Vedas who were antagonistic to animal sacrifice in the Yajñas, the Vrātyas, the Mahā Vrātya (i e Ṛṣabha) their Prajāpati Parmesthin etc all refer to Jainas. Many of the Upanishads esp the Chhāndogya and Mundaka, the latter using many Jaina technical terms. Its discussions are also quite akin to Jainism, its author Angiras was formerly a Jaina Muni (see Dr Johannes Hertell) Mahābhārata (Śānti Parva Mokṣa Dharma ch. 238 v 6 Anuśāsana Parva ch 14, v 18, ch. 149 p 41 50, 80) *Rāmāyaṇa (Bālkāṇḍa 14, 22)* Yoga Vāśiṣṭha (15, 8) Hanuman Nāṭaka practically all the Purānas and most of the other religious and even secular works. For the similarity between the Brahma Vidyā Vādins of the Upaniṣads and the Jainas see (IHQ—III p 307 15—article of Umesh Chandra Bhattacharya)

[2] Abuse of Jainism in Non Jain literature—J G May 1917 p 144 The author says, What are generally attacked in Jainism are not the true principles of this religion, but merely some outward forms or customs which are supposed by these antagonists to be essentials of Jainism From these old and well known philosophical works down to insignificant tales and dramas, passages might be collected which purport to ridicule Jainism The language is grave, caustic, filthy or even obscene according to the attitude and taste of the writer The criticism of Jainism is generally wrong and misguided' (Also see J G Jan 1918, p 45)

[3] In several Vedic hymns some of the Purāṇas, Yoga Vāśiṣṭha, Bharthari s Śatakas etc

very often misunderstanding and misinterpreting them[1] In certain places, devotion to Jina or to particular Tirthankaras, even to Jain ascetics, is ranked much higher than all the religious observances enjoined by the Śrutis and Smrtis[2] And if there are to be found stories to the effect that Jainism was propagated by some or other follower of the Vedas who had dissented from his parent creed, there are similar stories, equally old, in the Jaina tradition that it was Marichi, the grandson of Lord Rsabha, who shrinking from the austere creed of the Jina, preached a false doctrine from which later on developed the 363 Pāsandas like the Vedic and such other faiths which were [illegible] contravention of the nonviolent creed of the [illegible] In fact, according to the Jaina tradition, it was [illegible] times of the 10th Tirthankara Śitala Nātha that [illegible]manism made its first appearance and in the [illegible] the 20th Tirthankara the bloody sacrifices [illegible] first impetus under royal patronage

Even a reputed vedic scholar Prof. [illegible] says, "According to the Jaina scriptures, [illegible]

[1] The Jaina doctrine mostly critised by the [illegible] sophers is the Syadvada Eminent sch[illegible] (Vedânta Sūtra) and Śankarācārya tried [illegible] But as Dr G N Jha once observed even [illegible] did not understand it properly Swami [illegible] Prakāsha (Ch 12) Hopkin s 'Religions [illegible] examples of such wrong and misguided [illegible]

[2] Viṣnu Purāna (3, 341 p 457) Sh[illegible] Śiva Purāṇa Nāga Purāṇa, Manu s code [illegible] v 8-9) etc. See also Hindu Śastras Pt. [illegible] Marga Prakāśaka by Todar Mall, p [illegible]

grandson of Ṛṣabha Deva was a materialist Because the Vedas represent the same materialistic spirit, it was certainly due to him that they (the Rgveda etc) came to be popular Consequently there are several hymns to be found in the Vedas and Purānas, in the memory of sage Marichi, and there are mentions of the Jaina Tīrthankaras at many places Hence there is no reason why we should not accept the existence of Jainism in the Vedic age" [1]

In fact, there is whatsoever no tangible evidence to show that Jainism branched off from the Vedic religion or from any of its later developments, at such and such time, nor there is any marked similarity between the fundamental doctrines and essential features of the two systems which might favour that possibility Jainism with its perfectly non-violent creed, animistic belief, subtle and peculiar karma theory, its rejection of a creator and the creation theory, and the like, is not only quite an original system but is also absolutely independent of all other systems In its origin, it is not only non Aryan and pre-Aryan, in the sense that these terms are now generally understood, but it is also primitive and absolutely indigenous Barrister C R Jain, successfully refuting the Hindu-dissenter theory, concludes, "Thus Jainism, the creed of the holy Tīrthankaras, far from being a daughter or rebellious Child of Hinduism, is actually the basis of that undoubtedly ancient creed", and that if there was any borrowing, it was more the otherway round [2]

[1] His opinion about Jainism p 27—see Bhagawān Parśwanātha p 22. Also see—Citra maya Jagat.

[2] Practical Path—App p 194

Prof Jacobi says, "In conclusion [illegible] my conviction that Jainism is an original [illegible] distinct and independent from all other [illegible] therefore, it is of great importance [illegible] philosophical thought and religious [illegible] India" [1]

And discussing the place of Jainism [illegible] of Indian philosophy, M.M. Dr Ganganatha [illegible] concludes, "The Jaina philosophy [illegible] certain principles in common with [illegible] Sāṅkhya, Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika systems [illegible] not disprove its independent origin [illegible] ment If it has some similarities with [illegible] systems, it has its own peculiarities [illegible] ences as well [2]

Prof G Satya Narayan Murti [illegible] of its doctrines are peculiar to [illegible] stamp of individualism on the Jaina [illegible] Guerinot, that "Jainism is very [illegible] and systematic doctrine" [3]

Prof Chinta Haran Chakravarti [illegible] possible at this stage of our knowledge [illegible] comparative antiquity of Jaina and [illegible] the realistic and rational [illegible] not fail to attract notice of [illegible]

[1] The Metaphysics and Ethics of [illegible]
[2] Jain Gazette 1921 p 16[illegible]
[3] Jain Gazette, 1916, p 73
[4] Bibbographica Jai[illegible]
[5] Jains and Hindus[illegible]

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Another scholar says, "We may make bold to say that Jainism, the religion of Ahimsā (non-injury) is probably as old as the Vedic religion, if not older There is no doubt that the religion of Ahimsā was as old as the Vedas themselves"[1]

Yet another eminent thinker observes, "Besides there being numerous references to Jainism in the Vedas and Purānas, another, simple fact shows that Jaina philosophy is as old as Hindu philosophy It is a feature of the early epoch of the development of metaphysics that the catagory of quality is not defined For instance, in Vedānta Brahma is not said to possess 'existence, intellect and joy' (Sat, Chit, Ānanda) as qualities of his nature, but he is existence, he is intellect, he is joy itself (Saccidānanda) Similar is the case in the Jaina metaphysics It treats merit and demerit (Dharma and Adharma) as substratum rather than as qualities as substances with which the soul comes into contact Yet another fact is its hero-worship, the worship as deity of perfected mortals And such worship is characteristic of all primitive religions[2] Lastly there is its animistic belief, again a primitive notion"[3]

In fact, as Dr Edward Thomas, speaking about the simplicity and hence higher antiquity of Jainism, remarks, "The more simple faith perse must be primarily

[1] Cultural Heritage of India, Vol I—Sri Ram Krishna Centenary Memorial Vol. p 185-188

[2] Carlyle's Heroes and Hero-worship'

[3] Jain Gazette 1906

accepted as the predecessor of the more complicated"[1] And "What more simple" asks Major Gen Forlong "can there be than Jainism, be it in worship, in rituals or in morals"[2]

Reviewing the whole situation, Prof M S Ramaswami Ayengar may be quoted, who says, "For a scientific student of early Indian History, the history of the Jainas begins from the time of Mahavira who is supposed to be the founder of Jainism This conception regarding the origin of the faith has unfortunately led scholars to believe that Jaina tradition and literature are unreliable and useless for reconstruction of history The less well informed amongst them went so far as to say that Jainism was an offshoot of Budhism, simply because certain details in the lives of Mahävira and the Buddha are coincidental Nor was Dr Hoernle, perhaps the most well meaning amongst the writers on the subject, any nearer the truth when he said that neither of the sects could lay claim to originality regarding their moral code, but that the Brahman ascetic was their model from which they borrowed many important practices and institutions (Vide Hoernle's Presidential Address, CAS, 1898) With, however, our present knowledge of the Jainas and their sacred literature, it is not difficult to prove that Jainism, *far from being an offshoot of Buddhism or Brāhmanism, was one of the earliest home religions of India* The simple devotion of the Jainas and their homely prayer, without the intervention of a Brahmana

[1] Early faith of Asoka, p 5-6

[2] Short Studies in the Sc. of comp Religion.

may prove not merely their high antiquity, but what is more important, the independent nature of their existence" [1] And according to F W Thomas, "Jainism on the other hand (i e unlike Buddhism etc) has preserved down to the present time, its integrity as a separate world in the midst of Hinduism" [2]

To quote a few of the legal authorities, T N Sheshagiri Ayer, M L A, ex-judge, Madras High Court, says, "I have no desire to date the Jaina religion at a period subsequent to the Vedas, it might be simultaneous with them Jainas are not the Hindu dissenters I can fully bear out the statement that all Jainas are not Vaiśyas They are of all castes and grades" [3]

The Hon'ble Mr Justice Coomar Swami Shastri, Chief Judge, Madras High Court, observed, "Were the matter res-integra, I would be inclined to hold that modern research has shown that Jainas are not Hindu dissenters, but that Jainism has an origin and history long anterior to the Smrties and commentaries which are the recognised authorities on Hindu Law and Usage In fact, Mahāvira, the last of the Jaina Tīrthankaras, was a contemporary of Buddha, and died about 527 B C The Jain religion refers to a number of previous Tīrthankaras, and there can be little doubt that Jainism as a distinct religion was flourishing several centuries before Christ In fact, Jainism rejects the

[1] The Jains in the Deccan—Jain Gazette XVI p 212 and S I J, Pt I

[2] Legacy of India, p 212

[3] Jain Gazette, June 1922, p 145

authority of the Vedas which form the bedrock of Hinduism and denies the efficacy of various ceremonies which Hindus consider essential"[1]

And Mr Justice Rangnekar of the Bombay High Court remarks, "It is true the Jainas reject the scriptural character of the Vedas and repudiate the Brāhmanical doctrines relating to obsequial ceremonies, the performance of Śrāddhas and the offering of oblations for the salvation of the soul of the deceased Amongst them there is no belief that a son by birth or adoption confers spiritual benefit on the father They also differ from the Brāhmanical Hindus in their conduct towards the dead, omitting all obsequies after the corpse is burnt or burried Now, it is true, as later historical researches have shown that Jainism prevailed in this country long before Brāhmanism came into existence or converted into Hinduism It is also true that owing to their long association with the Hindus, who formed the majority in the country, the Jainas have adopted many of the customs and even ceremonies strictly observed by the Hindus and pertaining to Brāhmanical religion"[2]

Lastly, Pt Jawahar Lal Nehru, the first premier of independent India, asserts that "Jainism and Buddhism were definitely not Hinduism nor even Vedicism, still they were born in India and were an inseparable part of Indian life, culture and philosophical thought The Jainism or Buddhism of India is a cent per cent product

[1] A.I R. 1927 Madras 228
[2] A.I R. 1939 Bombay 377

of Indian thought and civilization, yet none of them is Hindu Hence it is misleading to call Indian culture by the name of Hindu culture" [1]

It would, therefore, seem quite strange that there still are people, and amongst them some scholars of repute, who are still sceptical about the antiquity and independent character of Jainism As Prof S Srikantha Sastri says, "It has become customary to take granted the *statements of certain historians that Jainism like* Buddhism represents a reaction to the sacrificial cult of Vedic Aryans, and in the case of Jainism many scholars are reluctant to take back the history of the faith before Pārśwa in about the 9th century B C." [2]

But as Dr Jacobi observes, "There is nothing to prove that Pārśwa was the founder of Jainism Jaina tradition is unanimous in making Ṛṣabha, the first Tīrthankara, as its founder There may be something historical in the tradition which makes him the first Tīrthankara" [3]

Dr A N Upadhye, M A, D Litt says, "To take a practical view the Jaina Tīrthankaras like Ṛṣabhadeva, Nemīnātha, Pārśvanātha, Mahāvīra etc. have been some of the greatest mystics of the world It would be interesting to note that the details about Ṛṣabhadeva

[1] Discovery of India. Pt Nehru however, is quite mistaken in holding the long rejected view about the origin of Jainism *and in asserting that it was founded by Mahāvīra in the 6th century* B C.

[2] The Original Home of Jainism—J A., XV, 2, p 58.

[3] Ind Ant IX, p 163

given in Bhāgawata practically and fundamentally agree with those recorded by Jaina tradition" [1].

And Prof R. D Ranade, giving details of Ṛṣabhadeva's mystical life, rightly designates this first Tīrthankara of the Jainas, as "Yet a mystic of different kind whose utter carelessness of his body is the supreme mark of his God realization" [2]

Dr S C Vidya Bhushan—"Jainism reaches back to the beginning of the creation itself I have no doubt in asserting that Jaina philosophy is much anterior to Vedānta and other systems" [3]

Dr N N Basu—"Probably Ṛṣabhadeva was the first to discover the art of writing He seems to *have invented the Brahmi script for the* propagation of Brahma-Vidyā, and that is why he came to be known as the 8th Avatārā He was born to Marudevī, the queen of the Indian king Nābhirāja and is mentioned in the Bhāgawata as the 8th of the 22 Avatāras" [4]

Dr Sir Radhakrishnan also affirms that "The Bhāgawata Purāna endorses the view that Ṛṣabha was the founder of Jainism There is evidence to show that so far back as the first century B C there were people who were worshipping Ṛṣabhadeva, the first Tīrthankara There is no doubt that Jainism prevailed even before Vardhamāna or Pārśwanātha The

[1] Paramatma Prakaśa (R.J S Bombay 1937)—Intro p 39
[2] Mysticism in Mahārāshtra p 9
[3] in an Address—See Satyārtha Darpana p 97
[4] Hindi Viśwakoṣa, Vol I p 64 and Vol. III, p 444.

(the grandson of Manu, the son of Brahmā), that he practised yoga, was paid homage to by the great sages and that he propagated Jainism" [1]

In fact this agreement between the different traditions, about Rśabha being the founder of Jainism,[2] is so singular and striking that its validity cannot be doubted, for as Prof Stevenson remarked, "It is so seldom that Jainas and Brahāmanas agree, that I do not see how we can refuse them credit in this instance, where they do so" [3]

Thus to conclude, in the words of Barrister Champat Rai, "Hinduism itself has always admitted and never disputed the antiquity of Jainism and of its founder Rṣabhadeva whom the Hindus regard as an incarnation of Visnu He is mentioned in the Purānas which place his historicity beyond question, giving the name of his mother Marudévi and of his son Bharata after whom India came to be called Bhāratawarsa in the past According to the Bhāgawata Purāna Rṣabhadéva was the ninth incarnation of Viṣnu and preceded the Vāmana (Dwarf), Rāma, Krṣna etc

[1] Bhagawata (Hindi Edition), 2, 7, 9 10

[2] Old famous Budhist works like Dhammapada Śata Śāstra, Nyaya Bindu also mention Rṣabha as the first Jaina Tirthankara Even in the Avestan Language the words Arhat and Rṣabha are found The latter, according to the Avestan dictionary means a man, a hero, or a bull, which are in agreement with the Jaina meaning of the word bull being the distinctive symbol of Rṣabha Mr Govind Pai proves the Avestan use of the word to be very ancient—(see I H Q—III p 473-475)

[3] Kalpasūtra—Introd. XVI

who are also regarded as Avatāras Now since the Vamana Avatāra, the fifteenth in the order of enumeration, is expressly referred to in the Rgveda, it follows that it must have priority in point of time to the composition of the hymn that refers to it, and in as much as Rsabhadeva even preceded the Vāmanāvatāra, he must have flourished still earlier"[1] Swāmi Karmā nanda also, from his deep and comparative study of the Vedic literature, successfully proved that Rṣabha was the first promulgator of religion on earth[2] Even the epigraphical evidence reaching back to several centuries before Christ, amply supports this view[3]

Now, this Rṣabhadeva was the progenitor of the Ikswāku race,[4] the noblest and most ancient race of Indian Ksatriyas from which later on branched off the Solar and the Lunar families (the Sūrya and Candra Vamśas) Rsabha himself belonged to the most primitive and indigenous race of India—the

[1] Practical Path, and Lord Rṣabhadeva, the founder of Jainism

[2] Dharma Kā Ādi Pravattaka

[3] See Jaina stupa and other Antiquities of Mathura and JBORS—III—465 67

[4] Rṣabha was the first to discover the use of Ikṣu (sugarcane) and hence was called Ikṣvāku—(see Ādi Purāna p 77 78 16 34 and Harivamśa Purāna 13-32 of the Jainas) The fact is also referred to in the Rgveda (10 60 4) and a number of Hindu Purānas according to which the first man, son of Brahmā the creator was Manu and his race was called Mānava He had ten sons but four had their progenies The eldest son of Manu was Ikṣwāku whose progeny was later on called the Solar race (see also Bhāratiya Samskṛti, p 12 Pargitor—AIHT Bhāratiya Itihasa Kā Rūpa Rekhā, p 124, Bhārata Kā Ādi Samrāt etc.)

Mānavas His father and several other prominent predecessors, as well as he himself were called Manus The other tribes which began to appear in India from his times onwards were the Rkṣa, Yakṣa, Nāga, Phani, Gandharva, Kinnara, Vānara etc termed under the common name of Vidyādharas being prominently skilled in various kinds of arts, crafts, engineering and such other scientific enterprises Modern scholars generally like to call these latter people by the generic term Drāvidian Rṣabha preached his Dharma to both the Mānavas and Vidyādharas alike His son Bharata was the first emperor of India and after his name the country came to be known as Bhāratawarsa and his progeny as the Bhāratas[1] Prior to that this land was known as Añjanābha or Himavarṣa Ayodhyā,[2] the first Indian city was the birth place of Rṣabha and the seat of Bhārata's government Gajapur (later on known as Hastināgpur) and few other cities and states soon came into being

There are, however, some scholars who still like to believe that it was the Puruvamsi Sarvadamana alias Bharata of Hastināgapura, the son of Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā (of Kalidas fame) who was responsible for the country being named as such

But there is ample evidence to show that even long before the birth of this son of Śakuntalā, nay even before Puru, the father of his race, migrated to India, this country was called Bhāratawarṣa and its

[1] 'Bharata Aura Bharata' and Bhārata kā Ādi Samrāṭ

[2] N L. Dey—Geog Dic. of Anc. Ind., pt I, Calcutta, 1899.

natives Bhāratas Not only the Jaina traditions but almost all the Brahmanic Purānas testify to the fact that it was the Bharata, son of Rṣabha, the son of Nabhi after whom the country was named Bhārata [1] References to this fact are also available in the Vedas and other branches of the vedic literature [2] Prof J C Vidyālankāra says, "We are tempted to think that our country was named Bhāratawarṣa after this Bharata (the son of Śakuntalā and Dusyanta) but this naming is attributed to another much more earlier king Bharata, the son of Rṣabha, who is either a legendry figure or some prehistoric person" In another place he says, "The first of these (Jaina Tīrthankaras) was Rṣabhadeva after whose son Bharata's name this country came to be known as Bhāratawarṣa" [3] There thus remains no reason to doubt the truth of this tradition and the historicity of Emperor Bharata, the son of Lord Rsabha who was the first Cakravartin of the Jaina tradition—the first Indian king who was a universal conqueror and world potentate, particularly when his existence is well corroborated by the different traditions

As a matter of fact, the Hindu history of India is generally made to begin from the advent of the Aryans into this country, just as the British or European history of India used to begin from Alexander's invasion And so every event and person prior to or outside the pale

[1] See p 43 Note 4 and the Markandeya Brahma Purana issue of Kalyāna XXI, 1, p 251

[2] See p 46 Note 1

[3] BIR.—p 146 2

of the Vedic religion and culture is regarded unhistorical or at best prehistoric The Rgveda is the first and earliest of the Vedas and is supposed to be the oldest book in the world's library It is believed by the majority of scholars, both eastern and western, to have been composed in the form of isolated hymns ranging over a long period sometimes between 4500 B C and 2500 or 1500 B C The advent of the Vedic Aryans through the Northwest Frontiers of India is also dated to about 3500 to 2500 B C[1] Lord Rsabha and his son Bharata, the great emperor are obviously much anterior to these times Prof S Srikantha Sastri takes back the antiquity of Jaina tradition to at least 20,000 B C and asserts that the original home of Jainism was certainly some where in Bhāratawarsa, although at the same time he is inclined to believe it to be a phase of the indigenous Aryan culture before the commencement of the sacrificial cult of the Vedas[2]

The epoch making discovery of the prehistoric Indus Valley civilization of Mohanjodaro and Harrappa further sheds a new and significant light on the antiquity of Jainism Sir John Marshal emphatically asserts that, "a comparison of the Indus and Vedic cultures shows incontestably that they were unrelated The vedic religion is normally aniconic At Mohanjodaro and Harrappa iconism is everywhere apparent In the houses of Mohanjodaro the firepit is conspicuously

[1] Tilak—(Arctic Home of the Aryans and Orian) Jacobi Winternitz Max Muller Majumdar Rangacharya etc. etc.

[2] The Original Home of Jainism—JA XV 2, p 58

lacking"[1] "At Mohenjodaro there have been discovered many nude figures which "depict personages who are no other than Yogis"[2] And nudity has been one of the characteristics of the Jaina Śramanas[3] Lord Rṣabha himself went nude and his images are represented as such Even in the Rk-Samhitā there is a mention of the "wind girdled Bachhanters—Munavah Vātavasanāh", who according to Dr A Weber, seem to be none else but Jaina ascetics who "also appear to be referred to in the well known accounts of the Indian Gymnosophists of the time of Alexander the Great"[4]

Now about these nude yogic figures of Mohenjodaro, it has been said that "These statures clearly indicate that the people of the Indus Valley, in the Chalcolithic period not only practised yoga but worshipped the images of the yogis"[5] And R. B Prof Rama Prasad Chanda says, "Not only the seated deities engraved on some of the Indus seals are in yoga posture and bear witness to the prevalence of yoga in the Indus Valley in that remote age, the standing deities on the seals also show Kāyotsarga posture of Yoga" Further that "The Kayotsarga posture is peculiarly Jaina It is a posture not of sitting but of standing In the Ādi Purāna, Book XVIII, Kāyotsarga posture is described

1 Mohenjodaro vol I p 110 111

2 Ibid p 33 34

3 Nudity of Jain Saints Digambaratva and Digambara Muni

4 History of Religions in India—IA—XXX July 1901

5 Survival of the Pre historic Civilization of the Indus-Valley—Memoir—ASI

Mohenjodaro marks only an early stage in the development of Aryan culture"[1] Still the general tendency of the scholars has been in favour of the theory that the Indus people were of Drāvidian stock Rev Father Dr Heras is emphatically of the opinion that the Mohenjodaro people were Drāvidian, that the language of the Mohenjodaro inscriptions was a purely Drāvidian language and that their culture, religion etc was also Drāvidian

According to him Nandur, the land of the Crab[2] (the constellation crab of the zodiac), was the ancient name of Mohenjodaro He believes that the Nandur script was man's first attempt at writing and that the Nandur or Mohenjodaro civilization was earlier than that of predynastic Egypt and was probably man's earliest civilization The stage of this civilization is said to be Chalcolithic (copper-stone), iron not yet being known[3] According to Sir John Marshall this civilization "must have had a long antecedent history on the soil of India, taking us back to an age that can only be dimly surmised", and that it must have been linked with the then existing sister or mother civilization of central upper India (i e Ayodhyā Hastināpura region)"[4] Prof Childe wrote,

[1] Our Heritage (Bombay) p 12

[2] The Crab was the special symbol of Puṣpadanta the 9th Jaina Tīrthaṅkara.

[3] Different Interpretations of the Prehistoric Indus Valley culture of 3000 B C —by Dr B R. Chatterji Ph.D D Litt Principal Meerut College, M C. Magazine 1936

[4] Mohenjodaro and the Indus civilization (1931) Vol. I p 106.

"India confronts Egypt and Babylonia by the third millenium with a thoroughly individual and independent civilization of her own, technically the peer of the rest. And plainly it is deeply rooted in the Indian soil. It has endured, it is already specifically Indian and forms the basis of modern Indian culture."[1]

Thus this most ancient yet highly developed civilization of the Indus people, which is ascribed by eminent archaeologists and antiquarians, to the Dravidian people[2] who, according to Rislay, "are the earliest inhabitants of India of whom we have any knowledge",[3] shows ample proof of these people being of Jaina persuation, long before the birth of the Vedic religion or even the beginning of the Aryan civilization. These ancient Jainas are called Vrātyas or Vṛṣalas in the early Brāhmanic Literature.[4] They, with their well built cities (Puras) and non-solar non sacrificial cult were the indigenous [illegible] of the enemies whom the first Aryans had to encounter and no

contro- ... natically ... Nor it ... a philo- ... onsidered ... for even ... Smrties ... eligions

[1] New Light on the most ancient East (1939).

[2] Sir John Marshall, Father Dr. Heras, Rakhal Das, F W Thomas, Dr R K. Mukerji, Prof H. K. [illegible] Dr G R. Hunter and the eminent Assyriol[illegible] are of opinion that Brāhmī is the lineal descendant of the pre-historic alphabet of the Indus Valley. And [illegible] we know that Ṛṣabha was the first to discover [illegible] and that he named the first script he invented after his daughter Brāhmī.

[3] Census of India Report (1901), [illegible]

[4] Prof A Chakravarti M A, I.E.S. [illegible] Chapter on Glimpse of Ancient India, [illegible] Gazette XXI p 6 also see Modern Review [illegible]

settling and extending in this country. In fact, according to the Jaina tradition, Prince Dravida, a son of Lord Rsabha was the progenitor of the race who later on came to be called as Drāvidas Many Drāvida Princes of old are believed to have turned Jaina saints and as such are worshipped even to this day

Major Gen J G R Forlong, F R S E, F.R A S, M A I etc point out, as the result of his over seventeen years' study and research, that, "All upper, western, north-central India was then—say 1500 to 800 B C and indeed from unknown times ruled by Turanians, conveniently called Drāvidas, and given to tree, serpent and phallic worship but there also then existed throughout upper India an ancient and highly organized religion, philosophical, ethical and severely ascetical, viz Jainism, out of which clearly developed the early ascetical features of Brāhmanism and Buddhism Long before Aryans reached the Ganges or even the Saraswati, Jainas had been taught by some twenty two prominent Bodhas, saints or Tīrthankaras, prior to the 23rd Bodha Pārśwa of the 8th or 9th century B C, and he knew of all his predecessors—pious Rsis living at long intervals of time, and of several scriptures even then known as Pūrvas or Purānas, that is ancient, which had been handed down for ages in the memory of recognised anchorites, vānaprasthas or forest recluses This was more especially a Jaina order, severely enforced by all their Bodhas and particularly in the 6th century B C, by the 24th and last, Mahāvira of 598-526 B C This ascetic order continued in Brāhmanism and Buddhism throughout distant Baktria and Daccia, as seen in our

study I and 'Sacred Books of the East', vols XXII and XLV" Further he remarks, "instead of Jainism being, as was formerly supposed, an offshoot of Buddhism, it is shown to extend as far back as 3000 B C It is found flourishing along side the nature worship of the rude tribes in Northern India" [1]

In the words of S N Gokhale "Ahimsā is the keynote of Jainism a philosophy which comes from pre Aryan[2] days" And says Dr Kali Das Nag, "No one even amongst those who profess to know history knows that lacs and crores of years before Buddha, not only one or two but several Jaina Tīrthankaras had preached the gospel of Ahimsā Jainism is a very ancient religion and it has given much to Indian culture" [3] Dr Jacobi was also of the opinion that Jainism was related to the primitive philosophy of India [4] Speaking about the development of the atomic theory by the Indians, another eminent scholar says, "In the oldest philosophical speculation of the Brāhmins as preserved in the Upaniṣads we find no trace of an atomic theory, and it is therefore contraverted in the Vedānta Sūtra which claims systematically to interpret the teachings of the Upaniṣads Nor is it acknowledged in the Sāṅkhya and Yoga philosophies which have the next claim to be considered orthodox, i e. to be in keeping with the Vedas, even the Vedānta Sūtra allows them the rank of Smṛtis.

[1] Short studies in the Science of Comparative Religions p 243 244 and Chapter I

[2] Indian Theosophist.

[3] Anekānta X 6 p 226

[4] Jain Gazette 1922, p 46

But the atomic theory makes an integral part of the Vaiśeṣika and it is acknowledged by the Nyāya, two Brāhmanical philosophies which have originated by secular scholars (Panditas) rather than by divine or religious men Among the hiterodox, it has been adopted by the Jainas and also the Ājivikas We place the Jainas first, because they seem to have worked out their system from the most primitive notions about matter"[1] The same is equally true about the Karma doctrine of the Jainas, which is based on their own atomic theory, of their animistic beliefs and hero-worship[2]

Prof G Satyanarayan Murti wrote in 1916, that "Jainism seems to be an indigenous product of ancient schools of Indian thought Whatever the early savants of European fame have said to the contrary, it is to be noted that Jainism with all the glory of its Dharma and plenitude of its literature, both secular and religious has been handed down from a hoary antiquity Jainism has a history of its own, a history on most of the obscure parts of which fresh light is being thrown almost every year owing to the patient researches of many scholars, both in India and abroad The sources for the history of Jainism are now many and they have themselves, curiously enough a history of their own, viz Transaction of the Asiatic Society, and Asiatic Researches-Davis, Knox, Capt Mahoney, Hodgson, Dr Buchanon, Prof Wilson De la Maine, Dr Jacobi and Buhler—and a host of other Jaina historiographers"[3]

[1] Encyclopaedia of Rel and Ethics, Vol II p 199 200

[2] On these points we have already quoted references in previous pages

[3] Jain Gazette 1916 p 73

According to Gustav Oppert, Jaina Missionaries were the first preachers and religious teachers devoted to the indigenous population This is perhaps why *a temple more particularly of the Jainas is called a Palli* [1]

Lastly to quote one more erudite scholar, Sir Sanmukham Chetty, "It has occurred to me as a very interesting historical speculation as to what must have been the real genesis of this great religion in India looking at this great religion from that point of view, I am tempted to believe that Jainism was probably the earliest religion prevalent in India, and that it was the flourishing religion when the Aryan migration came in India and when the religion of the Vedas was being evolved in the Punjab I think it was the tremendous force let loose by Lord Mahāvira that really created Lord Buddha There is a very deep significance in the fact that *Lord Mahāvira and Lord Buddha* were contemporaries The standard of revolt set up by Lord Mahāvira must have been taken up Lord Buddha The very fact that the great Hindu saints who wanted to revive Hinduism in South India had to resort even to cruel methods to exterminate Jainism is proof of the hold that Jainism must have had on the people of *South India Recent historical researches* and archaeological discoveries have led scholars to believe that in the pre-Aryan period there flourished a very great civilization in India, which, for the sake of convenience I shall call 'Drāvidian civilization' I casually use the word for the sake of convenience because

1 On the original Inhabitants of Bhāratawarṣa (Westminister and Leipzig 1893) p 100, also p 62.

in these days unnecessary heat is generated when we use such phrases as 'Drāvidian Civilization' and the like, and my own belief is that Jainism was the religion of the Drāvidian people who were the pre Aryan inhabitants of India The Aryans came with their own ideas based upon ritualism and animal sacrifice, and the prominence given to the revival in the time of Lord Mahāvīra is only an indication of that feeling of revolt which came amongst the vast masses of Jainas in this country against this new cult and the practices which were the antithesis of the principles that the Jainas believed in"[1]

The oldest mystic symbols of India, like the swastika, Tridanda (or Triśūla representing Tri-Ratna), Dharma Cakra (wheel of law and the time wheel), the Nandyāvarta and Vardhamānakya (or the Nandipada), the tree, the stūpa, the crescent, lotus, animals like bull, elephant, lion, crab, serpent, and several others are found to have commonly used by the Jainas from the earliest times, even before they were adopted by Brāhmanism and Buddhism, and also before icon making became a fashion And there have been discovered certain prehistoric paintings in some Neolithic caves, tens of thousands years old, such as at Singanpur in Raigarh state which bear unmistakable traces of Jaina influence in these primitive times[2] Even the religious ideas of Paleolithic and Neolithic men in India whatever little is known of them, bear close resemblance to the cardinal features of Jaina philosophy, i e animism, life after

[1] Jain Gazette, June 1943, p 83-85

[2] Pre historic Jaina Paintings—JA, X, 2 and XI, 1, also see Pre historic India by P C. Mitra.

death, existence and eternal nature of soul, the psychic phenomenon of cause and effect resembling the Jaina doctrine of Karma, and so on[1] There is also sufficient evidence to show that there had always been non violent Ahimsite people depending solely on vegetable diet, side by side with meat-eating violent natures[2] The religion of very ancient predynastic Egypt, supposed to be lacs of years old also appears to be quite akin to Jainism[3] In fact, in the words of Forlong "It is impossible to find the beginning of Jainism" According to the Jainas themselves their religion is eternal, it existed even before Rṣabha, and even the date of Rsabha that they give is beyond computation

But to come back to the hard facts of scientific history, according to the geologists, anthropo geographers and other pre historicians, the last of the primeval ice age ended about eight to ten thousand years before Christ, and with it the Postglacial epoch commenced This is also the time assigned to the closing period of the Neolithic age (the new stone age) of the Quartenary epoch It was also near about this time that the so called Arvan people are said to have begun moving out of their Arctic home[4] In India

[1] Rangacharya—History of Pre Musalman India, vol I and Nava Jivan Gand 1 number, Oct 2, 1949

[2] S P Roy—Some Aspects of food question for man—J G April, 1911

[3] Compare Jainism with the religion of Ancient Egypt as described by Dr Robert Churchwell in his The origin and Evolution of Religion (London), 1924

[4] Tilak—Arctic Home of the Aryans, also works of Mitra Rangacharya etc.

cult or Jainadharma, by the Vedic people as Vrātya religion or Ahimsādharma, in the time of the Upaniṣads as Āthata Dharma or Ātmadharma, in Buddha's times as Nigantha Dharma, in the Indo-Greek and Indo-scythian periods as Śramana Dharma, in the so-called Hindu period as Jaina Dharma, Syādavāda Mata or Anekānta Mata, in the days of Bhakti movement especially in the Deccan as Bhavya Dharma, in Rajputana as Shrāvaka Dharma, in the Punjab as the religion of Bhābadās and so on. Besides being purely indigenous and the earliest religious system of civilized man, it is the only one which has miraculously endured so long and yet preserved its integrity down to the present day. Since its inception it has ever been acting and reacting on all religious systems it came in contact with, and influencing human thought and culture. Its contributions, too, to all the many domains of culture are by no means meagre or mean. It has the noblest and most practicable message of peace and good will, of universal brotherhood and sound bliss and happiness not only for the land of its birth but for the world at large, not only for the individual but for the whole of the mankind. Dr Nag said, "Jainism is not the religion of any one particular caste or community. But it is the religion of all living beings. It is international and universal." In the words of Rev. A. J. Dubois "Yea! his (Jina's) religion is the only true one upon earth, the primitive faith of all mankind"

Glory be to the creed of Jina !!!

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A I H T	Ancient Indian Historical Tradition
A I R	All India Reporter
A S I	Archaeological Survey of India
B I R	Bhāratiya Itihāsa kī Rūparekhā
C R	Calcutta Review
E H I	Early History of India
Ind Ant / I A.	Indian Antiquary, Arrah
J A	Jaina Antiquary
J D L.	Journal of the Department of Letters
J G	Jaina Gazette
J B O R S	Journal of Bihara and Orrissa Research Society
J R A S	Journal of Royal Asiatic Society
J S B	Jaina Siddhānta Bhāskara, Arrah
Q J M S	Quarterly Journal of Mystic Society
R J S	Rāyacandra Jaina Śāstramala
S B E	Sacred Books of the East
S I J	Studies in South Indian Jainism